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ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE DC-11WASHINGTON POST
11 August 1983**JACK ANDERSON**

Long-Distance Analysis Finds Castro Changing

Fidel Castro, the unruly ruler of Cuba and the godfather of Marxist revolutions in the Americas, has been undergoing long-distance psychoanalysis by U.S. intelligence experts for almost a quarter of a century. Along with the gray hairs that are overtaking his beard, he has displayed certain changes in behavior. For instance:

- Once a boozier and womanizer, Castro has now become something of an ascetic. Vodka and rum no longer seem to give him the same stimulation. He has even cut down on his beloved cigars. And the women who once shared his private life have died. His work has become his true mistress, the psychological analysts have concluded.

- On July 26, 1953, Castro led a group of students in a dangerous, almost suicidal attack on a government barracks. The failed attempt resulted in death for most of the rebels and imprisonment for Castro. To the analysts, the suicidal nature of the attack demonstrated his willingness to take desperate risks. But he has now become more canny and cautious. At the massing of U.S. mil-

itary power in Central America, for example, he began sending up conciliatory smoke signals.

- In the 1950s, Castro burst into the communist world still an unformed entity, a flamboyant figure among drab, almost anonymous Marxist leaders, an unguided missile apt to veer off in any trajectory. He chafed over the rigidity of communist dogma and bristled when the Kremlin tried to tell him what to do. But today he is a hard-bitten, calculating communist who is regarded by the Kremlin as a most dependable puppet.

The grim communist experience, however, has not put out the fire in Castro. He remains a looming presence on the international scene by virtue of a dramatic flair and a genius for propaganda. He has a tendency to present himself to the world in a series of triumphal speeches, with rhetoric that raises the hair on the back of the neck.

The psychoanalysts admire his incredible memory for detail. He rumbles and roars for hours at a time, artfully composing his speeches as he goes, without notes or Tele-Prompter. He has the oratorical artillery, the brains and the guile to create a great deal of mischief whenever a fortuitous conjunction of events arises.

Castro's personal life fascinates the analysts. He was born from a union of a middle-class man and the

Castro family maid. He went to a Roman Catholic school, then to university and law school, where he reportedly carried a gun and was a campus bully.

He was also something of a rake. He drank heavily, smoked great quantities of cigars and had many transient love affairs. Though he never married, he fathered a son by an unidentified mistress.

Castro had at least one lasting, intimate relationship. Celia Sanchez was close to him in the earliest days of the revolution, and became both lover and confidante.

Sanchez died in 1980, and there are reports that Castro has never completely recovered from her death. Not only was she a humanizing influence on him, but he now has few people he can trust the way he trusted Sanchez.

The only other woman known to be close to Castro, Santa Maria, committed suicide the same year, reportedly in despair over the direction the revolution had taken.

Two things have dominated Castro's life: his overwhelming ambition and his hatred of the United States. More than two decades of hostility and plotting by U.S. presidents have helped to give Castro an exalted status among Yankee-hating nations that he would not otherwise have. So while he hates us, he depends on our enmity to further his dreams of bigger things.